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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/670,045	09/24/2003	James R. Hawkinson	165.001US01	5025

7590 06/16/2004

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EXAMINER

DUNWOODY, AARON M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3679

DATE MAILED: 06/16/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/670,045

Applicant(s)

HAWKINSON ET AL.

Examiner

Aaron M Dunwoody

Art Unit

3679

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 September 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 September 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

No priority claimed.

Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosure statement (IDS) filed 9/30/2003 has been considered by the Examiner; however, the Norwesco, Inc. reference has not been considered, because the Examiner is unable to see the details of the reference.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to because a bracket should embrace the illustrations of Figure 1. Corrected drawing sheets are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of

Art Unit: 3679

any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

The disclosure recites a hole 36 and a hole 134; however, both of these statements cannot be correct.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1 and 3-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US patent 5971444, Hawkins.

In regards to claim 1, Hawkins discloses a tank fitting comprising:

a coupling (12) comprising:

a flange (20) disposed between a first end and a second end of the coupling; and external threads (26) disposed between the flange and the first end;

a gasket (16, 18) disposed on the coupling between the flange and the first end of the coupling so as to abut the flange; and

a nut (14) threadably attachable to the external threads of the coupling.

Art Unit: 3679

In regards to claim 3, Hawkins discloses the coupling being a male/female coupling, a male/male coupling, or a female/female coupling.

In regards to claim 4, Hawkins discloses the coupling further comprising a female-end region adjacent the first end.

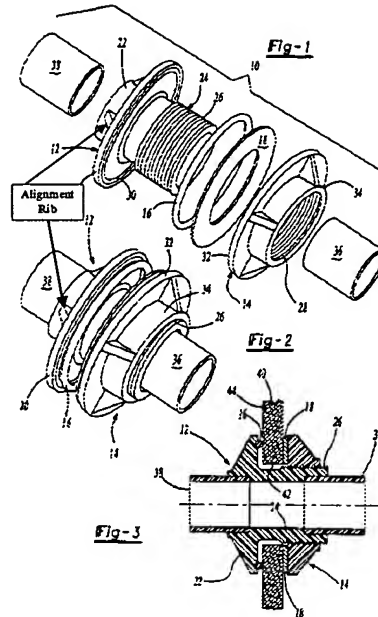
In regards to claim 5, Hawkins discloses the female-end region comprising first and second sockets respectively having different internal diameters.

In regards to claim 6, Hawkins discloses the coupling further comprising a stepped internal bore having first, second, and third diameters.

In regards to claim 7, Hawkins discloses the first and second diameters respectively defining first and second sockets of a female-end region adjacent the first end and the third diameter is an internal diameter of a male-end region adjacent the second end.

In regards to claim 8, Hawkins discloses the nut further comprising an annular groove (30).

In regards to claim 9, Hawkins discloses an alignment rib (see Figures 1 and 2 below) disposed on the coupling between the flange and the second end.



Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2 and 10-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hawkins in view of US patent 2554622, Jones.

In regards to claim 2, Hawkins discloses the claimed invention except for the gasket having a hole and wherein the flange has a stud, the stud passing completely through the hole of the gasket. In Figure 5, Jones teaches a gasket having a hole and wherein a flange (71) has a stud, the stud passing completely through the hole of the gasket to prevent the rotation of the gasket (col. 5, lines 31-41). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to

Art Unit: 3679

provide a gasket with a hole and wherein a flange has a stud, the stud passing completely through the hole of the gasket to prevent the rotation of the gasket, as taught by Jones

In regards to claim 10, Hawkins in view of Jones disclose a tank fitting comprising:

a longitudinal stepped internal bore passing through first and second ends of the tank fitting, the internal bore having first and second diameters respectively defining first and second sockets of a female-end region of the tank fitting adjacent the first end, the internal bore further having a third diameter that forms an internal diameter of a male-end region of the tank fitting adjacent the second end;

a flange disposed between the first and second ends;

external threads disposed between the flange and the first end:

a gasket disposed between the flange and the first end so as to abut the flange;

a stud protruding from a face of the flange toward the first end and passing completely through the gasket; and

a nut threadably attachable to the external threads.

In regards to claim 11, Hawkins in view of Jones disclose the nut further comprising an annular groove that aligns with the stud when the nut is threadably attached to the external threads.

In regards to claim 12, Hawkins in view of Jones disclose an alignment rib disposed on an exterior of tank fitting between the flange and the second end.

Art Unit: 3679

In regards to claim 13, Hawkins in view of Jones disclose the alignment rib being located 180 degrees around the tank fitting from the stud.

In regards to claims 14-27, Hawkins in view of Jones disclose a method of attaching a tank fitting to a tank and a method of connecting a pipe fitting.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Aaron M Dunwoody whose telephone number is 703-306-3436. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30 am - 4:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P Stodola can be reached on 703-306-5771. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

.amd



**Aaron Dunwoody
Patent Examiner
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